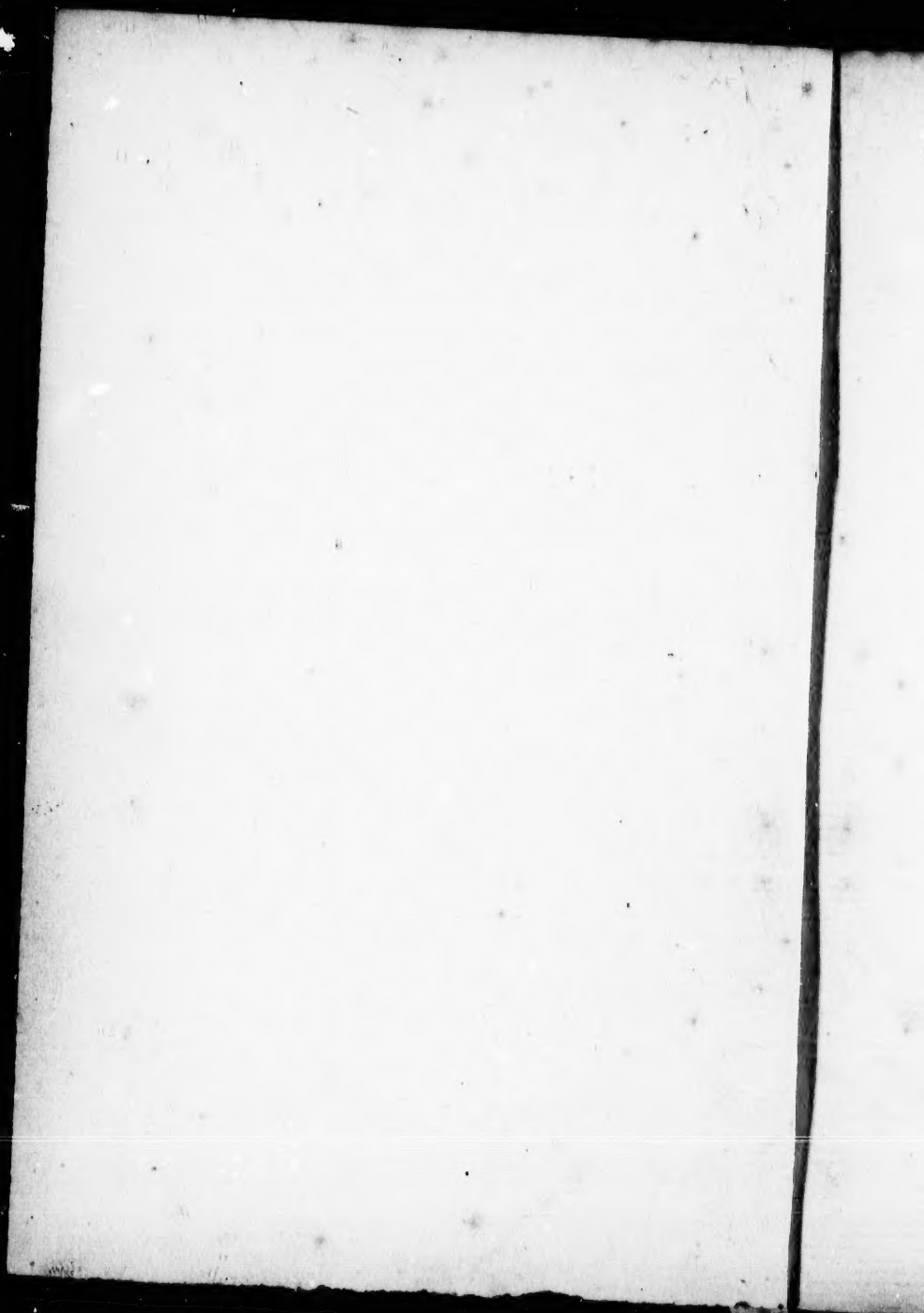


DRIFT.



DRIFT

BY

BECKLES WILLSON

*When the river onward gushes,
Bearing burdens on its tide ;
Drift is garnered by the rushes . . .*

LONDON :

GAY AND BIRD,

32, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.

—
1895.

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To C. A. G-T.

WITH THE DEEPEST GRATITUDE
AND AFFECTION.

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DRIFT.

*WHEN the river onward gushes,
Bearing burdens on its tide;
Drift is garnered by the rushes
Rescued from the ceaseless tide.*

*Spray from Huron, cones from Erie,
Hemlock from the Gatineau.
Grasses quaint from prairies dreary
Mocking at the ebb and flow.*

*Drift of weeds and drift of branches,
Odd wisps from the blue-bird's nest,
Yellowed stalks from distant ranches,
Sumac from the Golden West.*

*There are green and humble pages
Of our making which do sift
Life's grey river as it rages,
And leave hidden yonder—Drift.*

LONDON :
PRINTED BY TROS. WILLIAMS,
231, PENTONVILLE ROAD, N.

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MOTHERS have watched their
fledglings wing

Higher into God's broad sky;

Others have sung the songs I sing,

Sweeter than I.

Only I thought that my song would reach

Up to where you've built your nest;

Lonely, I sought to put life into speech,

As I knew best.

Longer and duller the path I view,

Who will mark my feeble scrawl?

Hunger I now for a smile from you,

Sweet, that is all.

THE MONK.

I CHANCED upon him while a summer
shower
Drenched all the landscape, all save our
retreat ;
We felt the glow of knowledge, and the
heat
Of communing made to pass a pleasant
hour.
"I'm aged !" quoth he, "you think me
worthy now :
But I bear not my message on my brow.
"My virtues are not mine ; my sterile
youth
Laughs me to scorn. My later years
Are all I cherish ; and my childhood's
tears.
The vale of my lost boyhood was not
smooth—
No soul strayed thither to admire the
vine ;
And if I virtues have, they are not mine.

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all save our
dge, and the
s a pleasant
ou think me
on my brow.
my sterile
ter years
childhood's
od was not
admire the
not mine.

"My soul throve not at first—the feeble
twig
Put forth such blossom never. Yet the
soil
In which it grew was generous. 'Twas
the toil
Of constant grafting made the stem wax
big,
And caused the plant to burgeon. I
became
A part—the best—of others—yet the
same.

"From them I borrowed sap, and bud,
and heart ;
And yet I scorned the world and all my
friends !
I fashioned for myself my own ends,
And throve, or strove to thrive, apart.
So might the lake despise the creek and
rill
That feed it, and its void basin fill.

"I struck the world, and thought it
struck me back,
And parried fancied blows till I grew
spent ;
While the world, unconscious, through
its labours went,
Nor knew of my existence, until, alack!
I, witless, sank upon its bosom; when
it kissed my cheek
And laved my fevered brow till I could
speak.

"And you are young, and mayhap be
of those
Who bear a grudge against your fellow
men,
And deem mankind is passing cruel,
when
It causèd naught ; your sorrows and the
blows
You dealt yourself. It gave the balm
alone."
And while I pondered, lo! the monk
was gone.

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THE PROGRESS OF LIGHT.

ERE daybreak, out across the hills
I rode to meet the dawn;
Past torrents, rivers, lakes, and rills;
O'er field, and moor, and lawn.

My horse sped on, and on, and on;
Then fell, all foaming white.
Shrill shrieking, as the first ray shone,
I fled before the light.

Unhorsed and crippled, fled I back
To seek my love, the dark.
Beneath the dripping dew, alack,
The night lay stiff and stark!

FRANCES: A THRENODY.

I.

I MOURN for Frances; and the billows mourn
And dash upon the rocks their briny tears.
High on this giddy cliff I sit forlorn,
With no irreverent sound to vex mine ears
Save the sad moaning of the wind. On high
The pale moon glistens, half obscured by clouds,
And quick, fantastic shadows on the waters lie—
Patches of fleck which seem like shrouds.

II.

Out on this vast, wide, solitary sea,
No human eye but mine looks down;
And silence such as this might only be
When hell to burst its bonds has helpless grown—
A fearful hush, too grim to last—
A longer space than that from light to light.

RENODY.

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cks their briny

I sit forlorn,
nd to vex mine

the wind. On
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looks down;
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last—
rom light to

III.

Hark to the moaning of the querulous
wind!

'Tis naught to me; yet that it doth
so weep.

What destiny hath it, it dares be mind
To grieve with thinking? Has the
fickle deep

Pressed to its bosom some younger love,
That Caurus moans as with a sorrow
fraught?

IV.

To others, Ocean, be that which thou
wilt.

To them who have the gift of dreams,
A sunny lawn of sea, all richly gilt
With gems. A maiden boisterous with
life,

A hoary sire—aught which them be-
seems.

But I, alas! was never Fancy's slave—
I see no lustre in thy distant wave—
To me thou art a grim, unholy grave.

v.

And yet, as in my dead, lost youth I had
 In churchyards dreams of life; so now
 I feel a touch of sweetness, and am glad
 At midnight on this drear and giddy
 brow;
 And all my tale of love comes smiling
 back to me,
 Above this mighty, fondless sepulchre,
 the sea.

vi.

And while I own this vision, which is
 mine,
 I pray that this may be my mortal
 end.
 O God of Life, I cannot more repine!
 Nor to a greater, deeper sorrow bend!
 Nor go forth to the world again to weep!
 My strength in passion did its flower
 spend:
 I'd lay me down for ever, now, to sleep.

VII.

Mine eyes are red with weeping, and
the breeze

Would fain assoil my grief, it moaneth
so.

Mine eye is red with weeping; yet it
sees

Something, O Christ, upon the waves
below:

A swathèd corpse, that calmly rides,
White as the primal snow. 'Tis she,
enfold

By frothy couriers of the polar tides,
With hair bleached to a silver hue
from gold.

I mourn for Frances; and I see her
there,

Drifting adown the flood like sweet
Elaine;

Or if yonder be not she,—her hair
and form,

Her melting features and her snowy
hands,—

It is the presage of a nearing storm,
Or strip of seaweed from unhallowed
lands.

She was my only love! I think she
died;—

I think she pined and withered, like
a tree

When light and water are to it denied;—

I think she paled, and her sweet
breath did flee

To Heaven. But whether in my heart
my bride

Expired, or the world, I'd ask of ye:

I only know—that she is dead to me.

I think she
withered, like

it denied;—
her sweet

in my heart

ask of ye:
lead to me.

MADNESS.

I WATCH the sea-gulls as they speed
O'er the bleak and sullen waves;
And I watch the ravens, without heed,
Perch midst a thousand graves.

Wearily, as the moth at night
Its feeble life outfretting,
I strove with wings to touch aright
The radiance of forgetting.

'Tis deeply conned by mist at noon,
Conned in the heat and snow;
And I wistfully crave of the vacant morn
What only the night can know.

I dread the night, and dare not ask
It surcease from my sorrow.
It holds the secret of my task,
Yet—I will wait the morrow!

THE BORDER.

O YOUTH have we, and pride of
race!

From surf to surf our lands extending.
We look all nations in the face,
But ne'er to any we'll be bending!
Our snows are cold, our hearts are warm,
We'll stint no laugh or honest greeting;
But to the foes who'd us alarm,
Another welcome they'll be meeting.

Let them come over the Border,
boys!

Powder and steel is the order,
boys!

For traitors and knaves, and
tyrants and slaves,

May stay where they are, o'er the
Border, boys!

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s extending.

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e Border,

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There caitiffs be in every land!

And cravens be in our Dominion,
Who'd see yon bird of prey expand
And cover us with her grey pinion.

But little reck ye of our hearts,
And little of our temper dreaming,
Could ye believe we e'er would part
With one green blade for all its
screaming!

SONG.

THOUGH dark the night, there is
a gem

I prize more than the moon.
Thy bright eye is a diadem—
To Love the night is noon.
And now I hang upon its glance
To make me sad or gay,
What need of speech the heart to reach!
Am I to go or stay?

Not with thy lips, but with thine eyes
Tell me the story of thine heart:
If I may win life's fondest prize,
Or if for evermore we'll part.

Oh! tell me what I long to know:
It is but yea or nay.
I can but stay, I can but go,
Tho' I would love away.
Thy voice is soft, and sweeter far
Than lark of Acadie;
But words are vain, and bring pain—
My Fate I'd learn from thee.

OUT TO SEA.

DRIFT we away from the shores
of youth—

Old-fashioned shores where a happiness
stood.

Drag us out, Life, from the boyhood's
good!

Drag us out, Tide, to the merciless
truth!

Out, out to sea!—where the breakers
roar;

Where the fierce human waves, o'er an
ocean bleak,

Struggle, and clamber, and foam, and
shriek,—

Wretched and rudderless drift we from
shore.

AT MIDNIGHT.

IT has been always so: men love the
 din
Of Life's artillery, and the pomp of
 marts;
Because the slow tear of charity, which
 starts
It, dries; and the soul silences within.

Yet there are times when this brave
 show of pride,
These puissant mobs, dissolve to little
 man;
And that man leisure finds, himself to
 scan,
At midnight—when the mask is laid
 aside.

THE MOTHERLAND.

'TIS our birthright to see the light
While other tribes in darkness
grope ;

We bow the knee 'fore no grandee,
Nor tyrant, demagogue, nor Pope.

And when fight we on land or sea,
For the love of the soil our blood we
shed,

And for the hawthorn white and red,
The heather, and the primrose bed.
Are English mothers, maids, and wives,
Not worth the peril of our lives ?

We do not dream of what we seem
To those we hold of meaner race ;
God gave us pride, to them denied,
And stamped our manhood on our
face.

WHEN O'ER THE DEEP.

WHEN o'er the deep our barks are
flying,
Strong arms the straining rudder plying,
There is no time for tears or sighing ;
Who cares for breakers or for foam ?
We sail for home !

When o'er the deep Life's bark is
flying,
False skipper he who'd e'er be crying :
" Put back, put back, the day is dying !"
Care we for daylight or for death,
Who sail for home ?

CANADA.

OUR Heritage, it was not bought
with gold,
But blood and valour paid for what is
here;
So our loved country deem we doubly
dear.
Its newness, not so much unlike the
Old,
We built our strength upon.

They, too, were strong and stern, our
sires;
Not upraised they in lands of mellow
light;
Their sinews also used to storm and
blight,
Ne'er knew they tropic gifts, or had
desires,
But what were hardly won.

MY HEART'S WITH THEE.

I VE grasped the friendly hands,
Our lips have said adieu ;
They'll seek their own in distant lands,
And songs of home ring o'er the blue.
No cote or hearth have I to boast,
My bark is ever on the sea ;
My home is there, Clarisse, where is my
heart—
It is with thee !

What matter where he toils
Who homeless is as I ?
What's wealth and fame to kindred's
smiles ?
What's country, language, flag, or
sky ?
And when I'm sought to name my
home,
Of Lucia's isle I'll choose to be.
My home is there, Clarisse, where is my
heart—
It is with thee !

THE BALLAD OF RODERICK REDDE.

A STRUGGLING young wit was
hight Roderick Redde,
Who seemed ne'er a jot to lose hope
with the years
Who laughed at his sorrows, and scoffed
at his fears.
Quoth he to himself (as he kept back
the tears):
"In Life, what care I for the path that
I tread?
'Twill surely be soft enow when I am
dede!"

He felt that the candle of merit would
shine
Through the bushel of hunger and
weatherbeat clothes,
Soiled linen, and pride, too, and
vagabond woes,
And divers devices that poverty knows;
So he drank him this bumper, in absence
of wine,
In a garret-brewed tipple of Fancy
divine:

"I thank Thee, God, who hast
fashioned me strong
To plod my way through the mire of
Fate,
Of hunger, of want, of envy, of Hate,
That my soul may attain to the wide-
open gate,
To beat down the giants of folly and
Wrong,
And gallop the highway of Glory along!"

He drank him a bumper—this vassal,
this slave—
"To the health of the world!" cried
Roderick Redde.

"It has thrust me in garrets, and fed
me on bread;
But a good time is coming, and, after
I'm dede,
And this poor, feeble clay is at rest in
the grave,
I'll have smiles from the fairest, and
cheers from the brave.

Prophetic young spark! With a stone at
his head,
The world straight proceeded to open
its eyes;
And the Critics, espying his tomes
with surprise,
Belauded his pathos and wit to the
skies;
Thus, on the same spot where his heart's
blood was shed,
Great became Master Redde—who a
decade was dead!

ENVOI.

O poets, if struggling! O brothers in
art!
No longer attempt to gain here for
your pains;
Strive hungrily onward, play nobly your
part,
And dream of Fame smiling—upon your
remains!

REGARD D'AMOUR.

WE shall never, never meet, little
maid!

Never smile and never greet, I'm afraid!
But your dainty, fleeting glance is
Queen of all my vagrant fancies:
It was shot into this bosom; and it
stayed.

True, such token is not mickle, little
maid!

And it may not prove you fickle or a
jade;

But an epoch must be reckoned,
That sweet fraction of a second,
For in it I learned to love you, little
maid!

We shall never, never meet, little maid!
Neither in the sunny street or the shade!
Be the future blank or laden
For myself or for thee, maiden,
In my heart your glance is graven, nor
can fade.

THE LAST CHIEF.

ONTARIO! my father's land,
I bear thee still affection deep;
Yet pray I the great Father's wand
May never lull my sons to sleep!

"The march of white, the doom of
red!"

I muttered in despairing youth;
And straightway vowed to bow my head,
Because the white increased, forsooth.

I now am weak, who then was strong;
But age the strength of hate returned.
I would renew th' ancestral song,
Revive the torch which once had
burned,

And with my single might recall
The martial spirit of my sires;
With action quick offset the fall,
And kindle back the smould'ring fires.

Chiowa! my wrist is like a twig—
My body trembles like a leaf.
What though my heart with deeds is big?
My bosom torn with hate and grief?

By Erie's banks I've wandered long,
And dying, here I'll lay me down;
There are none left to right the wrong,
The eagle to her nest has flown.

BRITAIN IS NOT NOW A TINY ISLE.

B RITAIN is not now a tiny isle
Hemmed in by the rude North Sea,
But by the Ganges and the Nile.
Where the St. Lawrence
Heaves her torrents—
Where the South wind blows
And the Palm tree grows—
Britain is, and her sons be!

Yonder is only the Jungle home:
The Lion's lair, that he leaves behind
Into the forest wide to roam.
And near or far,
Where Britons are,
Oft in their sleep
Their fancies creep
Back to the fastness of their kind.

Think you it matters what sky covers
them?
Or what is the raiment Britons wear?
For the glint of the royal diadem
Pierces the shade
Of the African glade,
And the red of our flag
Is seen on each crag,
As it waves in the Arctic air!

MARAH.

DO not despond, O soul of mine !
Where'er the Future is, there
will ye be.

By placid hill, or dismal lea,
Or eke upon the turbid sea :
Where'er I hear call Destiny,
There will ye be !

Wax strong ! fear not ! I seek a way ;
O for a single ray, a glimm'ring spark,
To point my haven through the dark !
But ere these limbs be stiff and stark
I'll see the light, and list the lark
Proclaim me free !

For that ! for that ! what boot these ills ?
This weary groping in the cheerless
gloom ?

Serve ye this flesh, whate'er its doom,
I'll house me in the silent tomb ;
But ye sprang from no mortal womb,
O soul of mine !

MY SOUL.

IN vain the dull webs are daily spun
Around the beacon of my soul.
'Tis not in that poor insect's might
To weave a web so firm and whole
As to quench all its light.

That faint blaze must never feebler grow,
Which now the sordid woof consumes;
Thou madest this, my soul, to shine
Through webs of even greater looms.
Why should I now repine?

It may be, my light will never burn
With flame so strong, and large, and
clear,
As to be seen by all who grope
Afield. But to the frail ones near
It may bring Hope!

THE THREADBARE CAVALIER.

MY Love, she lives in a mansion
great ;

My paths I tread alone !
A slender purse my sole estate,
Yet she shall be my own.

Hail ! to my love in her silken gown ;
What though she noble be ?
Scorn to the scorn of a rival's frown,
When my Love smiles on me.

Away with the barriers 'twixt us both !
Which keep two souls apart ;
I'll have ye witness, world, our troth,
Or more than one spoilt heart.

My Love, she lives in a mansion great,
And I live in Ragfair ;
Yet I can wait—and I can wait :
And all mankind beware !

THE DOCTORS OF JACKSONVILLE.

IT was their trade. No pomp was theirs.

No public spoils or honours to be won.
Each went not out as he who bears
The sword of battle. These died alone.

Back to earth their forms are laid;
Or thrown, uncoffined. No last sacred
rite

Is done. Accustomed to the sight
No eyes have wept: few lips have
prayed.

No song is sung o'er them who nursed
With stoic brow, and their lot shared
When foul contagion loosed its worst—
The stricken. Not heroes they who dared
To stand when all their fellows fled—
"It was their trade" the people said.

This their sole requiem until Heav'n
cried

"This trade shall last when mortal tools
Are rust-choked, and fame laid aside,
And lost are all Life's petty social rules;
When War's high heroes have each
other slain;
When Art and Statecraft warp their
souls away:

Still shall be seen such band Samaritan
Plying such deeds of God-like charity."

MADRIGAL.

WHEN skies are bright,
Man's heart is light,
And April buds match maiden blushes;
Then every swain his love would gain,
Whose dimpled cheek with rapture
flushes.

When skies are grey,
O maiden say
Is not man's heart an object fickle?
Seek not to stop
The salt tear-drop
That from your violet eye will trickle.

When skies are black,
Man's heart, alack!
Like a plucked hedge-rose doth wither,
And Phryne's brow
Is sombre now
Her love has fled she knows not whither.

THE LAND OF THE MAPLE LEAF.

TWIXT the snows of the North Pole
And the heat of the Caribbees,
There lies the land I here extol.
At East and West two oceans roll ;
The half is severed from the whole
By a row of Maple trees,
A-quivering in the breeze.
From Cape Breton to Vancouver's reef
The Border surrounds, and limits, and
bounds,
The land of the Maple Leaf.

There, men's hearts are like the sun ;
And the maidens all are fair.
A better clime than that there's none,
If work, or play, or war'll be done.
You'll find the task is first begun
By a row of Maple trees
A-quivering in the breeze.
From Cape Breton to Vancouver's reef
The Border surrounds, and limits, and
bounds,
The land of the Maple Leaf.

THEY ALL COULD GO.

THEY all could go—I scarce would
sigh,

If you'd remain.

There is no pang I would not bear,
No grief I would not gladly share,
I'd smile at any change of sky,
If you were by!

They best could go—that sad-faced
throng

With puny hearts; in whose cramped
veins,

And these, doth slowly course along
The blood, that crawled to us like brine,
From some ancestor in the northern
fens—

If you were mine.

NOTRE DAME.

SOMETIMES, when the day draws
her mantle around her,
And I sit in the shadows with half-
closed eyes,
From the spire at hand comes a pealing
of grandeur,
The sound of the bells as it mounts to
the skies.

It is not for my ears that it seems to
be pealing ;
It is not for the folly that fills up the
hour ;
It is not for the sinner within the
Church kneeling ;
It is not for the minions of lucre
and power.

Some voices are weak, and some souls
are oft pinioned
By chains, which self forges from
falsehood alone.
In vain do some tongues, by ambition
dominioned,
Cry the prayer which shall reach, in its
strength, to the Throne.

Lo! there in the clouds are shapes
saintly and smiling;

'Tis to them—'tis to them that the
melody pours!

Not for you, O vain world that an hour
beguiling,

This echo of penance from Notre
Dame soars.

Peal loudly! ye vespers; thy grand
tones are ringing

The prayers of the few to the saintly
array,

Who, higher and higher, to Paradise
winging,

Are lost in the mist of the white,
starry way.

THE RAINBOW.

A BLACKENED sky, a cloud of dust,
A row of shapes in doorways
thrust,

The rain beats down in savage gust.

A patter at first, great drops of rain,
Sheets upon sheets in ruthless train,
Drenched eaves and gushing lane.

And then a calm; the sky o'erhead
Grows less and less the hue of lead;
Away in the West is a tint of red.

And in the East a mist is seen,
Its middle a column of haziest sheen,
Blue and yellow, crimson and green.

It lifts to Heaven its wondrous bow,
The tide of light resumes its flow,
And slowly fades the arc's bright glow.

But babes have crooned in rare delight,
The toiler's heart has grown more light,
Life's task has grown a shade less trite.

ULTRO OBLATUS.

O ARCH disturber of my studious
calm,

Release me from thy coy entwining.
I court thee not, nor need thy balm
To soothe a spirit far from pining.

I court thee not O Love ; so heed
Where thou thy poisoned shafts are
flying:
Lest thou and not the swain should
bleed,

And Love so hit be speedy dying.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

A CENTURY of years to-day is
heaped upon her grave:
The beautiful, the chaste, the noble
Queen of France.
What martyr fair as she in all the wide
expanse,
That is with annals sown or story ever
gave?
One half so bright—one tithe so brave?
What lesson ever taught of human lust
For blood, for power, or all-corroding
change
To equal this? What tale so strange
As of a queen flung headless in the dust
Because she fearless was, and kept her
trust?

DESTINY.

I NEVER seek beyond to rise
Life's vanity and common things,
But heaven, for some purpose wise,
Puts forth its hand, and clips my wings.

Once, when I writhed in torment fierce;
Again foiled of my purpose wide;
Resolving yet yon clouds to pierce,
I heard a voice above my pride :

"Not all the strength ye have in ye,
Nor all the strength ye may implore,
Avails ye aught. 'Tis God's decree :

*'Your will, and not your deeds, may
sear !' "*

LONDON.

HOW hast thou girded me, London,
and jeered at me,
Chid me, and tumbled me? How often
sneered at me?
How thy thick vapours have darkly
upreared at me?
How in the night thy dulled moon has
peered at me?
Was I afraid?

No, for I loved thee, grey city, and
blessed thee;
Romped with thee, writ of thee, in gay
colours dressed thee.
Oft hath my fancy, o'erteeming, caressed
thee;
And to thy bosom once more I have
pressed me,
When I have strayed.

THE LAUREATE.

HERE is the scroll—dip ye the pen,
And write in grief—write, yet in
pride,

The last name in that minstrel choir:
He sang the hopes and deeds of men—
And died.

Sweet, mighty choir—whose tongue
ascends

To drown the din of daily woe,
It to our ears seems fuller—higher
Than that which sang our worthiest ends
Ago.

Nor shall his fame be less, I ween,
Because he trod the ways of grace;
For that he scorned the gilded mire,
All Time shall keep his laurels green—
All race.

ISOLÉ.

ALL mankind is moving round me,
With its restlessness of mind;
But Fate's mighty chains have bound me
In a prison from my kind.

Others have their pain and pleasure,
Others have their ends to gain;
Moving to the world's great measure,
I, alone, have only pain.

Round me, millions,—happy, hoping,—
Feel all that Life has to give!
In the darkness I am groping,
Hardly deeming that I live.

Is there no one, God, give answer,
Who knows solitude like mine?
Is it that my soul is denser?
Has my heart's blood changed to
brine?

Heartstrings dulled, no chord respondeth
Save to touch of sympathy.
Surely others like despondeth—
Surely some are lone as I!

OPPORTUNITY.

I STOOD, at eve, in a great clock
tower,

And gazed at the throng below,
Piercing the dusk to the dialled hour,
Watching the minutes go.

And each time that the bell did sound,
Far down in the street below,
A spirit sped: yet all around
Still watched the minutes go.

No hand was raised to lift the dead,
Nor eye was wet with woe;
But in the throng he made his bed,
Who watched the minutes go.

I wrung my hands in horror then,
And cried to those below—
“Why gaze ye still, O sons of men,
At the fleeting minutes go?”

“Turn, turn your sight to nobler things,
Forget this fleeting span!
Who counts dull time, life's treasure
flings
From him, a ruined man.”

They heeded not—with glassy eyes
Fixed fast, with fevered glow,
They cast from them the cherished prize,
To watch the minutes go.

WITH THE WORLD.

LAUGH with the world, old friend ;
be gay.

Then seek thy lonely chamber, where
Thou may'st ignoble deeds forswear,
And there repent a misspent day.

Lust with the world, be base and small ;
Then haste thee to the quiet brook,
From Nature's pure, reproachful look,
Learn, thou, thy degradations all.

Lie with the world, for wealth and fame ;
Then, at thy bedside, hold it right.
Deem for thy hearth thy actions light,
Because it gilds who bear thy name.

Thus thou may'st sear thy conscience,
friend ;
By slow degrees crush out the spark ;
And, godless, groping in the dark,
Deathward thy lonely journey wend !

THE WORLD IS POTENT.

THE world is potent when it has
offended. Make
Of the offender your master, not your
foe.

As master can ne'er slave insult, the
blow

Has little smart when the rod break
Upon the flesh alone. 'Twould wound
the pride

Were mankind, as foe, your frail strokes
to deride.

Vassals the quicker learn the secrets of
the Manse—

Ye hold the priceless keys to go and
come!

Jest when your master jests, speak, or
be dumb;

Pamper his vain blood, that in his
heart's expanse,

'Twill gush there ruddier, in that moment
blest,

When you can plunge the poniard in
his breast!

IN THE CLOSET.

WE are all philosophers profound,
And sages deep, inscrutable;
Yet, when we move abroad, I'm bound
To say we are refutable.

Within our closet we're magnanimous,
Contemning deeds uncharitable;
But there, ye Heavens! how unanimous
We are in being irritable.

O, brave and good we are in verity!
To the world, still small and asinine.
Anathema! hence his asperity,
Who wails in language saturnine.

A boon of Fate we ask: to be that
What we do seem in solitude.
Cannot the shallow world but see that
We are not what in folly viewed?

YOUTH.

I.

WHEREFORE let sombre care
securely sit,
And have a haven, in a growing mind?
When Age and sore decrepitude knock
without,
'Twere but in nature both to greet
With mien resigned; but sunny youth
should lock
Its gates to a restraint and providence.

II.

It is decreed, by powers past our fitful
ken,
That youth must wait for what it seeks.
The flame,
Too early else, might spend itself in
wanton glare,
Or lumine but a single spot, where else
its light
Would reach, in rays of steady pow'r,
All up Parnassus' still-beshadowed slope.

LA LUTTE.

WORE away night's shadows never
Into grey and fitful dawn,
But some one, in strong endeavour,
On his couch,—with features wan,

Wan with striving, wan with weeping,
Heedless of the dark or dole,
Hating the dull world for sleeping,—
Fought a battle with his soul.

And the day comes dull or glowing,
And the warrior, tempest-tossed,
To the world the same front's showing,
With that battle won or lost.

LOST.

O RUTH is fair, and fair is her form,
And her eyes are a sight to see.
Her cheek is soft, and her breast is
warm—
So like a sylph is she.

Her cheek is pink, and her throat is
white ;
And her tresses are flax in hue.
Her heart (O her heart) is as black as
night ;
And her tender eyes are blue.

Her soul is the dusk of the day of wrath,
And her voice is low and sweet.
Her walk is as straight as a virgin's path,
Where once trod her dainty feet.

Ah, Ruth is fair, and her form is fair,
And her face is a sight to see.
Her cheek is soft as her silken hair,
And she is lost to me.

YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR ROSES.

YOU shall have your roses, sweet.
Life is your suitor, he'll bring
them you

(Not for you the struggle and blight :
Smiles and kisses and glad sunlight,
And the morning dew).

You shall have your roses, sweet.
Love's a gallant, he will choose the best.
Not for you the passionate dole,
Not for you is the chastened soul
And the wild unrest.

You shall have your roses, sweet.
Death's an old beau, he will lay them
there.

Not for you the storms dreary gust,
When your cold heart is up-heaped with
dust

You'll be as fair.

L'AIR MANQUANT.

LIKE a lark in its flight empyrean,
Her voice rings out through the
room;
And she sings of things, as she touches
the strings,
That scatter away the gloom.

She trills me the ballad of "Robin
Adair,"
And the tropes of the "Low-backed
Car";
Passing fair is the air of "Wapping
Old Stair,"—
Passing sweet the wheezy guitar.

She runs through the time-cherished
melodies,
Sweet warbled by lassies of Rye;
Yet—unsung by her tongue is the song
to have wrung
A tear from out mine eye.

It lies—in my bosom—asleeping,
But some day it will wake to the light,
And the theme of my dream will glisten
and gleam
Like a radiant star at night.

DESPONDENCY.

IS not the mind of youth—
When overcast with toil and early
care—
Like to a desert's arid path?
No flowers are or verdure there.

Is not the goal of Life,
When won with grief, and misery, and
pain,
Like to a rose midst myriad thorns
Which, glistening, shatters when we
gain?

SMOKING SONG.

AND when shall a woman come to
replace thee?

I have known thee well, I have loved
thee long!

When shall a woman come to erase thee?
To blot out tobacco, good liquor, and
song.

CHORUS.

For a bottle and pipe, they make a
man ripe,—

They make a man ripe, stout-
hearted, and gay.

Then here's to the fellow who loves
the weed mellow,

And a plague take the woman
who leads him astray.

When shall a lassie seem sweeter and
dearer,

With a smile and a kiss for a bowl
of the weed,

A cluster of curls for a mug of Madeira,
A prisoner's lot for the life of the
freed?

O woman! O woman, your fond
lips, alack! O

Your snowy white breast, and your
deep azure eyne,

Will woo us, despite us, from dainty
tobacco;

And what, to your charms, is a bumper
of wine?

CHANSON À MARCHER.

SING the poets, Love divine ;
And the tipplers praise their wine
To set the pulses beating, and the heart
strings thrilling through.
But these are enervating, momentarily
elating ;
And when the spell is over, pray confess
it, ye feel blue.

Now toast him to the dregs,
The god who gave us legs ;
For when brooding melancholy comes
upon us unawares,
There is nothing half so bracing
As a league or too of pacing,
And the surest, best prescription is to
walk away our cares.

SONNET.

DREAM on thy dream, nor wake,
sweetheart ;

The moonlight plays upon thy brow.
Soon salt drops from those lids will
start,

But now, my love, thou smilest now.

I would not see thee different ;

The change will come in its due hour.

Thy girlish laugh will hollow ring—

The world will have thee in its power.

Dream on thy dream: and yet I weep

To see thy brow so sweet, so fair.

A little lapse and Life, not sleep,

Will hold its grey dominion there.

NOT ENGLAND'S BENDED KNEE.

S HALL England stoop and yield her
ground,
And see the links of race unbound ?
Shall yonder Union Jack be furled,
And England from her heights be hurled ?
England stands where England stood :
O Britons, guard your brotherhood !
And hand to hand, and blood with blood,
Face the phalanx of the world !

All loyal hearts, in every clime,
Up ! Drink a toast with me :
*"Old England's arm ; her bended arm,
And not her bended knee !"*

While Britain rules on land and waves,
We will not stoop to truce with slaves.
Our fathers' blood was shed in vain,
If traitors strike these bonds in twain.
Wave on, proud flag, by breezes fanned,
Wave o'er one Queen, one Heart, one
Land !

Joined in love shall ever stand
All her children in the main.

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IF MY HEART HAD WINGS.

IF my heart had wings it would distant
 roam,
If my love were a dove, it would seek
 its home.
Though the winds of the ocean blew
 fierce and shrill,
Love ne'er would rest, nor its wings
 grow still ;
Beauty its compass, and youth its chart,
If my love were a dove—it would reach
 thy heart !

What matter the night, were it dark
 and drear ?

What matter, if I'd wandered far or near ?
If my love were a dove, and my heart
 had wings,

I'd be like the lark that at Paradise sings
For an angel to open its portal of gold,
And thy bosom my wandering love enfold.

LOVE AND LILACS.

THE south wind sped from a scented
isle,

Where Flora fair reposes.
Orchids it blew, and jasmine too,
And breath of tropic roses.
It stole upon my hungry sense,
And left me faint and reeling,
But ne'er a blossom's odour rare
Unto my heart was stealing.

O the Lilac's the flower I bring,
Kissed by the Bee and the Spring.
In sunshine and rain there comes Love
in its train,
There's magic and youth in the Lilac.

Upon my ladye's breast there lie
Sweet lilies in a cluster,
And in her hair beyond compare
Rest tulips full of lustre.
But in my ladye's heart there is
No hedge-rose from the gloaming,
A sweeter blossom lovers seek
When Love he goes a roaming.

ANACHRONISTIC.

O MAIDEN fair, O mistress mine,
A threadbare lover's dying;
Of riches, talent, beauty, none—
Only equipped for sighing.

You'd jostle in the crowded lane.
He'd doff his shabby cocked hat.
And mistress fair, he'd sue to you
A scandal you'd be shocked at.

Yet blithely, too, he'd worship you
Without your gold and jewels;
Take brave delight in scaling walls,
Or fighting lover's duels.

But maiden fair, no dream so bright
But Fate doth love to mock it.
In Eighteen Eighty Nine am I,
While you are—in a locket!

A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE.

NINE strikes the clock and the
miner is here,
N'er sooner ne'er later this many a year.

Look how he bends ; see his odd muffled
throat,
His dry, wrinkled cheek, and his
threadbare coat.

Out from his pocket he takes his pick,
And delves away till his sight grows
thick.

The live-long day he digs and delves
At the buried treasure beneath the
shelves.

But n'er a nugget or grain of gold
Could the simple pate of the miner hold.

Often, methinks, when the miner is dead,
He'll have books at his coffin and
books at his head.

His clay to a grave of books they'll
consign,
With *Liber mortuum* writ on his shrine.

TO A FRIEND.

A FOOL'S Paradise? Who would
not abide,
Though Fortune did henceforth nothing
but chide,
In a fool's paradise? 'Tis your fashion
to scorn
At the careless young wit with a future
forlorn,
But the present's his own, and why
should he fill
The little he has with bodings of ill?
If we pondered in Life on the shortness
of it,
On the folly of gilding a globe we
must quit
So quickly,—we scarcely can do more
than sigh,
Laugh, love, weep, in a breath, and
then die,—
We should poison God's air with our
cynical breath.
'Tis best to enjoy—Let's be fools to
the death!

THE SHERIFF.

A SHERIFF bode in a Kentish town,
His paunch as full as his beard
was brown;
Of mighty renown his Cimmerian frown.

And criminals of every kind
With fetters he would tightly bind,
In cells confined with vermin lined.

He jingled keys where'er he went,
That could be heard all over Kent;
His staff him lent a grim portent.

When children heard him on the street,
They turned full white as any sheet,
And scuttled fleet on shodden feet.

But in his house, O sad to think!
This dreadful man scarce dared to blink,
And his frown of ink to the floor would
sink.

No more than a mouse his wife him
feared;
His family, too, at his greatness sneered;
And his babes were reared to pluck at
his beard!

ANAGRAM.

(To Clarie.)

CLEAR thy young brow of parting,
grief, and pain;
Lo, for the future becks thee with a
smile!
And if unto these loved ones thou
should'st ne'er again
Return: shine brightly thou on them
awhile
In tropic climes. That sun, which,
rising there
E'en softer, will, than here, more fair
appear!

PLAIN.

PLAIN? you ask. Ned wuz sartinly
plain—

The homeliest man from the coast of
Maine

To the Golden gulf; an' so fur from
vain,

Of vanity Ned hadn't nary a grain.

"Jest plain" wuz his motto—all over, I
guess;

Plain in his manners, an' plain in his
dress!

'N' plain in his intellect,—quick to
confess

His ignorant "*No*," when another 'd say
"Yes."

One o' the plainest, ol' fashionest kind

'At ever I see; generations behind

The run o' the settlers you nowadays
find.

Alongside o' Ned, them settlers, they
shined!

He never *did* nothin'! This here ain't
a tale

O' the way that Ned made a durn
villain to quail,

Or rescued a gal on the Indian trail,
Or give up his life for a comrade frail.

Yet, if they'd to do, he'd ha' done it
right

In the plainest way, yit with all his
might.

No; Ned wuz called home o' the fever
one night,

'N' we buried his body by a bonfire
light.

Jest shuffled off plain, 'thout nary show;
"Plain truth," says he, "is: I'm sorry
to go;

But Him what's aloft will let me, I
know,

Turn down my blame lights in Paradise
—low."